DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 206 948 CG 015 386

AUTHOR Ryan, T. A.
TITLE A Model for a Deinstitutionalization Program for Youthful Offenders.
PUB DATE 13 Apr 81
NOTE 19p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (65th, Los Angeles, CA, April 13-17, 1981).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adolescents; Delinquency; *Delinquent Rehabilitation; Formative Evaluation; Individual Needs; Institutionalized Persons; Juvenile Courts; Models; *Needs Assessment; *Program Implementation; *Residential Programs; *Systems Approach; *Youth Problems
IDENTIFIERS *Deinstitutionalization (of Delinquents)

ABSTRACT

This model of a deinstitutionalization program begins with a definition of juvenile delinquency and historical antecedents of current juvenile justice approaches. The extent of juvenile delinquency is noted, and the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act is reviewed. The deinstitutionalization model is presented as a residential program for dependent youth, 13 to 15 years of age, who demonstrate the ability to function successfully in traditional foster home settings. The rationale for the model, needs assessment methods, product and process goals, performance objectives, and alternative methods for achieving product goals are described. The implementation plan is reviewed, focusing on public relations, legislation, implementation schedules, advisory committees, community participation, budgeting, staff recruitment and training, and facilities. The formative self-evaluation procedure is also described in the systems approach to planning, implementation, and evaluation. (NRB)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

ED206948

# A Model for a Deinstitutionalization Program for Youthful Offenders

T. A. Ryan
University of South Carolina

Paper presented at the
American Educational Research Association Meeting

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

T. A. Ryan

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CG015386

Los Angeles, California

April 13, 1981

# A MODEL FOR A DEINSTITUTIONALIZATION PROGRAM FOR YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS

T. A. Ryan

## Introduction

### Definition of Juvenile Delinquency

In a broad sense, juvenile delinquency is behavior by a young person who is subject to the jurisdiction of a juvenile court that violates a local, state, or federal law. This encompasses a wide-range of behaviors. It applies to juveniles who have committed rape or murder; those who have run away from home to escape intolerable or even threatening situations. Juvenile delinquency in various jurisdictions includes having a fist fight; fishing without a license; taking a ride in a car without the owner's permission; buying beer, wine or liquor; drag racing; having sexual relations with a person of the opposite sex; skipping school; gambling for money in card games; and exceeding the speed limit.

### Historical Antecedents

Until the late nineteenth century, juveniles were tried and sentenced according to the standards of the adult criminal courts. With the establishment of the juvenile court system, and the adoption of juvenile codes by the various states in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, broad and varied guidelines as to what constituted acceptable and what was unacceptable juvenile behavior were established. The age set as the upper limit of the juvenile status was not uniform among states, and no distinction was made between unlawful acts by juveniles that would be considered crimes if committed by adults and acts that were considered unlawful only for juveniles. There was no uniformly accepted definition of juvenile delinquency, and no common pattern for dealing with delinquency cases.

Each state had its own definition of juvenile delinquency and its own approach for handling delinquency cases. In some states juveniles were sentenced to incarceration in adult prisons: in other states juveniles were sentenced to special institutions, usually called reformatories, for youthful offenders. The treatment of the youthful offenders both in adult facilities and in reformatories for juvenile delinquents varied greatly. Many of the institutions for youth at best could be called inhumane. The mingling of youth with hard core adult criminals was a travesty on justice.

Presently, many states still do not specify the minimum age at which children can be held personally responsible for their conduct but take the minimum age recognized by common law, that is, seven years. The upper age limit for juvenile status generally varies from 16 to 18. In 42 states a child who commits a serious offense, such as murder, forcible rape, or armed robbery, may be transferred to the criminal court for trial as an adult.

Extent of Juvenile Delinquency

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, of the eight million individuals arrested and charged in 1975, two million were under 18 years of age. Those under 18 years of age were responsible for 23% of the violent crime and 48% of all property crime. They were charged with 55% of all motor vehicle theft, 53% of all arson, 65% of all vandalism, 40% of liquor law violations, and 33% of all offenses involving buying, receiving, or possessing stolen property.

The year 1974 was a turning point in juvenile justice in the United States. On June 30, 1974 there were 829 public juvenile detention and

correctional facilities in the United States, 396 of which were operated by the states and 433 by local governments. The number of public juvenile facilities ranged from only one in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Idaho to 111 in Florida. The facilities held nearly 45,000 juveniles of whom approximately 35,000 were male and 10,000 were female. On the same date nearly 32,000 juveniles were held in 1,339 private facilities. According to the National Jail Census, juveniles were detained in adult jails in 43 states.

Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act

In 1974 the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act was enacted. The Act called for coordination of all federal delinquency prevention and treatment programs, and mandated deinstitutionalization of status offenders; that is, those youth whose offenses would not be considered crimes if committed by an adult. This includes running away, truancy, disobedience, and incorrigibility. The 1974 Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act mandated states to develop and submit plans for deinstitutionalization of status offenders, in order to qualify for federal juvenile justice funds. At the time the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act was passed 17 states and the District of Columbia made no distinction between status and delinquent offenses; 26 used various phrases to designate behavior that was illegal for juveniles only; and eight classified some non-criminal juvenile activities as status offenses and others as delinquencies. Even in states that distinguished between offenses, the processing, treatment, and dispositions given to status offenders did not differ substantially from those applied to delinquents.

In 1977 the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention called for help in getting the states to develop deinstitutionalization plans. We responded to this call and developed a generalized planning model, which used a systems approach to plan, implement, and evaluate deinstitutionalization models. From 1978 to 1980, we directed and supervised the development of deinstitutionalization plans. The delivery system plans took different forms and employed a wide-range of alternatives for accomplishing the deinstitutionalization plan. One model which was developed and subsequently implemented provided for a residential program for dependent youth 13 to 15 years of age. The facility was for youth who had demonstrated the ability to function successfully in a traditional foster home.

## Model for an Alternative Foster Care Program for Adolescents Goals and Means for Achieving Goals (1.0)

### The Rationale (1.1)

This model was designed within the context of a rationale which included consideration of historical antecedents and development of a set of basic assumptions to establish a foundation for setting goals and devising alternatives for meeting the goals.

Historical Antecedents (1.1.1). The significant history of the program dates to pre-1975 when status offenders were handled in the same manner as delinquent youth. In 1975 services for status offenders were transferred from the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, Division of Youth Services to the Division of Family Services. In 1976 statewide reorganization of the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services changed the name of the Division of Family Services to the Department of Social and Economic

Services. Prior to 1976 the Department of Social and Economic Services was responsible for dependent youth who were abandoned, abused, or neglected. In 1976 the Department of Social and Economic Services also assumed the program responsibility for status offenders as well as dependent youth. A great deal of difficulty was encountered in finding traditional foster care homes capable of meeting the differential needs of the status offenders. Consequently a new type of foster placement was needed. Status offenders for whom foster care could not be effected were being placed in Emergency Shelter Care. These youth remained in shelter care beyond the maximum 21 day limit because no workable foster care situation could be found.

It was within this historical context that the plan for alternative foster care was developed.

Basic Assumptions (1.1.2). The basic assumptions which were made in establishing the foundation for development of the alternative foster care plan concerned status offenders and programs for these offenders.

It was assumed that status offenders are not delinquent; therefore, they should not be treated as delinquents (1.1.2.1).

It was assumed that status offenders were not dependent, therefore, they required different treatment and/or programs from dependent youth (1.1.2.2).

It was assumed that residential programs were effective for status offenders if properly designed and staffed (1.1.2.3).

It was assumed that proper place would reduce the likelihood of a status offender becoming a juvenile delinquent (1.1.2.4).

Needs Assessment (1.2)

As a prerequisite to setting goals and devising means for achieving the goals, a needs assessment was made. This was accomplished by projecting an ideal (1.2.1), analyzing the real-life situation (1.2.2) and comparing the two to identify discrepancies (1.2.3). Discrepancies were found which related to needs of the juveniles (1.2.3.2) and also to needs in the system (1.2.3.3).

Needs of the Juveniles (1.2.3.2). There were seven needs which were identified that should be met for the target population.

The status offenders which were in foster care programs with dependent youth should be removed and placed in a program designed to meet their special needs (1.2.3.2.1).

The status offenders needed to improve their self-concepts, and this could be accomplished if they were placed in a stable situation and not continually being rejected by foster care parents (1.2.3.2.2).

The status offenders needed to improve in coping skills (1.2.3.2.3).

The status offenders needed to improve their academic skills. It was felt that reducing the pupil-teacher ratio from 25:1 to 16 :1 could help greatly to meet this need (1.2.3.2.4).

The status offenders needed to develop the capabilities of determining and implementing appropriate behaviors for different situations (1.2.3.2.5).

There was a need to reduce placement failures. Foster placements generally were of short duration because the status offender was treated as a dependent youth. Status offenders need a different type of placement from dependent youth with programs designed especially to meet the needs of status

offenders; not dependent youth. This would reduce placement failure (1.2.3.2.6).

The status offenders needed to develop work-related skills and understandings (1.2.3.2.7).

Needs in the System (1.2.3.3). A number of needs were identified which would have to be met in order to provide a viable system for meeting the needs of the status offenders.

There were serious needs for programs and services (1.2.3.3.1).

An educational program needed to be developed, which would reduce pupil-teacher ratio to 16:1 and the adult-pupil ratio to 1:8 (1.2.3.3.1.1).

Nursing services should be provided, which would require the equivalent of a half time nurse (1.2.3.3.1.2).

A residential program needed to be provided (1.2.3.3.1.3).

In addition to program needs, there were needs for staff which would be assigned to work with status offenders and would have the special competencies for this assignment (1.2.3.3.2).

It was found that modifications would have to be made in existing facilities in order to provide the kind of residential program that was envisioned as the ideal (1.2.3.3.3).

A full complement of hardware and software, as projected in the ideal, would have to be obtained (1.2.3.3.4).

Finally, funds to support the program would need to be provided (1.2.3.3.5).

Synthesis of Product and Process Goals (1.3)

The assessment of needs provided the basis for subsequent definition of the goals to be achieved. Two categories of goals were defined. Product goals were established, which set the desired ends for the status offenders. Product goals described the desired outcomes for the status offenders, as defined initially in the ideal projection and subsequently prioritized as client needs. The process goals referred to the means to be employed to accomplish the product goals. Process goals defined what would have to be achieved in the way of programs and services, staff, facilities, hardware and software, and financial support.

Product Goals (1.3.2). The goals of this model in terms of desired outcomes for the status offenders were prioritized.

The top priority was seen as having the youth develop the capability for selecting and implementing behaviors appropriate to different situations.

Next was the need for improved self-concept.

This was followed by the need to change their foster care placement; reduce their placement failures; improve in academic skills; develop work related skills and understandings; and, finally, to improve coping skills.

Process Goals (1.3.3). In establishing means for achieving the product goals, an array of alternatives was developed. This was done to ensure implementation of the plan, within the context of a number of possible contingencies.

Alternative (1.3.3.1). The first alternative called for employing one full-time teacher to work with a class of 16 status offenders residing

in existing emergency shelter care programs. This teacher would, in addition to teaching academic skills, spend at least 50% of the time dealing with student's inappropriate behavior patterns and lack of self-concept. This alternative would meet the first two client needs as well as the first program need. This is an alternative under conditions of minimum support.

Alternative (1.3.3.2). The second alternative called for renovating and changing one existing emergency shelter care home into a group home for eight status offenders. This would also necessitate the reassignment of personnel and training of the personnel to deal with status offenders on a long-term basis. If combined with Alternative (1.3.3.1) the first five client needs would be met for eight status offenders. Additionally, the first two program needs would be met.

Alternative (1.3.3.3). The third alternative called for employing a counselor to work with the status offenders, in addition to all of the elements in Alternatives (1.3.3.1) and (1.3.3.2).

Alternative (1.3.3.4). The fourth alternative, which would be the approach under conditions that full funding would be available, provided for all elements in Alternatives (1.3.3.1), (1.3.3.2), and (1.3.3.3), with the addition of medical services. With this alternative implemented, all client needs and all programmatic needs would be met for eight status offenders.

Performance Objectives (1.3.4). Assuming that Alternative A could be implemented, an array of performance objectives was devised to provide an accountability base. With the feedback concept which is inherent in a systems approach, the capability was provided for adjusting the objectives in the event of having to resort to one of the other three alternatives involving lesser degrees of support.

Change Foster Care Placement (1.3.4.1). It would be expected that implementation of the foster care placement system would result in removing 3% of the status offenders from emergency shelter care for six months.

Improve Self-Concept (1.3.4.2). It would be expected that of the youth placed in the program 80% would increase in self-concept after having remained in the program for six months, as demonstrated on change scores on the Pieres-Harris Self-Concept Scales, administered pre- and post-program participation.

Improve Coping Skills (1.3.4.3). It would be expected that once placed in the program, 80% of the youths would exhibit improved coping skills, after being in the program for six months, as revealed by the Attitude and Behavior Adjustment Reports taken one week before placement in the program and at the end of six months.

Improve Academic Skills (1.3.4.4). It would be expected that students in the program for six months would increase their grade level in mathematics and word recognition (reading) by at least eight months, as measured on the Wide-Range Achievement Test administered pre- and post-program. The anticipated increase was 40% higher than the normal grade improvement.

Develop Appropriate Behaviors (1.3.4.5). It would be expected that of the students in the program 60% would exhibit less anti-social behaviors after being enrolled in the program six months, as measured on the Devereaux Adolescent Behavior Rating Scale and teacher reports taken at the beginning of the program and after six months.

Decrease Placement Failures (1.3.4.6). It was expected that of the youth placed in the program, 90% would remain in this placement for longer than their previous foster care placements, as revealed by comparison of program records with previous placement records.

## Implementation Plan (2.0)

This plan essentially called for the removal of status offenders from the emergency care shelters in which they were being placed, and the substitution of a residential placement program. In the residential placement program, the youth would have a live-in environment strongly reinforced by counseling and education. They would live in a residential facility staffed by group home personnel, teachers, counselors, and aides. The residential facility would provide an environment of stability. The facility personnel would make it possible to develop relationships with significant others. The spectre of rejection, associated with constant moving from place to place--foster care parents to new foster care parents--would be replaced by an environment of caring and confidence.

The plan represented a dramatic change from the system that was in effect. The success of the plan depended in large measure on systematic implementation. It was accepted at the onset that effective implementation

depended on a climate of readiness and support, as well as the development and acquisition of equipment and materials, the training of personnel, and arranging for financial support and community support.

The implementation plan which was developed addressed these important considerations.

Public Relations (2.1)

The public relations program was a planned publicity campaign aimed at making the public aware of and supportive of the proposed program. Support was to be solicited from the School Board (2.1.1) which would be asked to provide a teacher and a teacher's aide for the program. The school system had been endeavoring to educate the status offenders in regular school programs. The students were discipline problems and disruptive to the regular schcol system. It was planned to emphasize the benefits to the school system that would come by removing these students from regular classes to the residential program.

Support would be solicited from the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (2.1.2) since this Department has the responsibility of responding to the legislative mandate to deinstitutionalize status offenders.

Support would be solicited from the County Commissioners(2.1.3). The Board of County Commissioners had established a Children's Study Commission about two years previously to evaluate the needs of children in the country. Some of the unmet needs identified by the Commission would be met with the Residential Program.

Support would be solicited from the Juvenile Affairs Committee (2.1.4), representing youth serving agencies. The group had a record of interfacing successfully with the legislature to meet needs of youth.

Enabling Legislation and Policies (2.2)

It was determined that no additional enabling legislation would be required for implementation of this plan. Florida Statutes Chapter 39 provide that the Department of Health and Human Services has programmatic responsibility for status offenders as well as dependent and delinquent youth. There were no federal, state, or county policies that would preclude implementation of the Residential Program.

Schedule for Implementation (2.3)

The effective and efficient management of time was considered essential for the plan to be implemented successfully. The Program Evaluation Review Technique was employed to sequence the activities involved in implementing the programs and services.

Organize Advisory Committee (2.4)

The Department of Children's Services had an advisory board that provided advice and counsel for programs housed at the site where this program was to be implemented. This advisory committee was familiar with the types of problems that the program would encounter. The committee would have the background of knowledge and experience to provide the necessary advice and counsel for implementing the Residential Program. Thus, it was decided to utilize the existing committee for this purpose.

Arrange Community Participation (2.5)

It was felt that the identification of available community resources and seeing that these resources were used in delivery of programs and services to the status offenders was extremely important. The need for volunteers and donations could be met through a well planned community participation program.

The Hillsborough County Children's Services Volunteer League was to be solicited for donations of materials and financial support for field trips (2.5.1).

The University of South Florida's Community and Service Encounter Group was to be contacted to arrange for referral of volunteers for the program (2.5.2). It was felt that the volunteers, and university students would be appropriate to work with status offenders in recreation, counseling, and off-campus field trips.

The School Enrichment Resource Volunteers organization would be contacted to provide speakers and programs for the educational component of the Residential Program (2.5.3).

The Service Corps of Retired Executives would be contacted for administrative assistance and program evaluation (2.5.4).

The Volunteers in Service to America agency would be contacted to provide senior citizens to assist the teacher in the classroom (2.5.5).

The University of South Florida College of Social Science would be contracted with to provide a masters level intern, to conduct the evaluation phase of the program (2.5.6).

The Hillsborough Community College Human Services Program would be contracted with to provide interns and assist in counseling and behavior management (2.5.7).

Provide and Allocate Funds (2.6)

This program implemented contingency planning concepts by preparing the budgets for the four alternatives, showing the objectives that could be achieved under each level of funding.

The plan also identified the sources of funds: State funds (2.6.1); County funds (2.6.2); and School Board allocation (2.6.3).

Arrange Staffing (2.7)

The implementation of the plan was seen as involving the recruitment, selection, and training of staff.

Recruitment and Selection of Staff (2.7.1). The staff employed by the Department of Children's Services would be advised of the new Residential Program and those desiring transfer to the Program would have that option. Selection would be made based on the concept of getting the individuals with the attitudes and skills needed for this type of program.

Training Staff (2.7.2). An assessment would be made of staff needs, as related to their specific job responsibilities, and a training program would be developed and implemented to meet these specific needs. Two weeks of pre-service training would be provided for the staff before they took over their new responsibilities. It would be intended that staff training would be ongoing, with monthly sessions based on needs identified by the

assessment process. Weekly feedback meetings would be held to allow for open communication and professional development.

Arrange Facilities (2.8)

To implement this plan renovation of existing facilities in the Department of Children's Services would be necessary. This was not seen as a major operation or a major hurdle. The facilities were available; they only needed modification to provide the kind of environment that the Program required.

Conduct Evaluation (3.0)

This model provided for self-evaluation. The assumption was that formative evaluation would provide the basis for making minor adjustments and modifications, and contribute to the success of the plan.

Orient Staff (3.1). It was felt that having a climate conducive to evaluation was one of the most important elements in the evaluation process. Therefore, it was planned to have all staff oriented to the evaluation process as they entered the program. This would be accomplished during the pre-service training.

Organize Evaluation Team/Collect Data (3.2). An evaluation team would be constituted, comprised of three individuals. This team would be responsible for setting an evaluation schedule and carrying out the tasks involved in collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data. It would be intended that data would be collected from teachers, group home parents, counselors, and administrators, in addition to students.

## Conclusion

This plan for a Residential Program for status offenders provided a viable alternative for deinstitutionalization of these youth whose offenses would not be deemed criminal if committed by adults. The plan was developed using a systems approach, linking the three major components: setting goals and devising alternatives for accomplishing the goals; operationally specifying the components of effective implementation; and establishing in advance a blueprint for evaluation.

This plan is noteworthy on two accounts: It addresses the long-overdue need to provide viable alternatives for working with status offenders. It employs a systems approach to planning, implementation, and evaluation.